A Strange, True, and Dreadful

RELATION,

of the Devils appearing to

Thomas Cox

a HACKNEY-COACH-MAN;

Who lives in *Cradle-Alley* in *Baldwins-Gardens*.

First, in the habit of a Gentleman with a Roll of Parchment in his hand, and then in the ſhape of a *Bear*, which afterwards vaniſh'd away in a flaſh of Fire, at Eight of the Clock on *Friday* Night, *October* the 31*th*. 1684.

LONDON: Printed by *E. Mallet*, 1684.

BRITISH MUSEUM

The True

RELATION

of the Devils appearing to

Thomas Cox

a HACKNEY-COACH-MAN

AMongſt the variety of thoſe ſtrange Diſcourſes, which have appeared in publick; I preſume nothing ever yet iſſued from the Preſs more remarkable than this preſent Relation, which is ſo ſtrange and ſurprizing in it ſelf, that I do not queſtion, but ſome curious and ſcrupulous Wits of this Age will diſcredit the Truth of it, and think it altogether fabulous in it ſelf, conſidering the dreadful Circumſtances which attend it: but I would adviſe thoſe whom *Atheiſm* and *Infidelity* has ſo far prevailed upon to amend their own vicious Lives, for fear a greater miſchief does correct their inſolence, to whom this

may be a fair warning. As to the reality of this Relation, I would ſo far engage the Readers good Opinion of the Truth of it, that I do aſſure him, the Perſon himſelf has related this from his own mouth; confirm'd it in the preſence of all thoſe Numerous Viſitants who daily croude to ſee him, with all the ſolemn and ſober proteſtations an honeſt man, and a good Chriſtian can averr the truth. And as I do not queſtion, but ſeveral perſons will give themſelves the ſatisfaction of inquiring out the truth; ſo *I* am well aſſured it will give an advantage and repute to this preſent Paper; when from all hands the whole world ſhall be ſatisfied in the candour Truth and Integrity of this Diſcourſe.

Had not *Thomos Cox* himſelf lived ſo near, that any perſon may ſatisfie himſelf of this Truth, ſeveral perſons who were preſent, both Divines & other Gentlemen of good Quality and Eſtate, would atteſt the Truth under their own hands.

Thomas Cox now lives in *Cradle Alley* in *Baldwins-Gardens*, and was formerly a *Labourer*, and ſerved *Maſons* and *Bricklayers*, but leaving that imployment has ſince drove a *Hackney Coach*; a man of a fair Life and Converſation in the eſteem and reputation of his neighbours.

On *Friday* the laſt of *October* he took up a *Faer* at *White-Hall Gate*, which he drove into *Water-Lane* in *Fleet-ſtreet*, which having ſet down, he was forced to drive to the bottom of the *Lane* to the *Thames ſide* to turn his Coach, and at his coming up called in at a *Victualling houſe*, where he drank a *Pot or two of drink* going

going into his *Coach-Box* he gently drove up the *Lane*, and within three or four doors of the upper end he ſaw a perſon ſtanding by one of the Poſts, near the Wall, in the habit of a Gentleman with a *Roll of Paper or Parchment in his hand*; it was then dark and about *Eight of the Clock* at *Night*: The Gentleman called Coachman, and he immediately ſtop'd and opened the door of his Coach; the Gentleman went in, and bid him drive to the *lower Church Yard* by *Fleet-Ditch*, which belongs to *St. Brides Church*; he went up into the *Box* again and giving his Horſes a Laſh, they ſtarted and his *Hat* fell off which forced him to light, & after he had ſome time in vain felt for it in the dark, the Gentleman asked him what he wanted; he told him he had drop'd his *Hat* and could not find it, and had rather have loſt *eight Shillings out of his pocket*; the Gentleman bid him look under one of his Horſes feet, which he directed him to and there he ſhould find it, he did ſo, and found it accordingly; though it was ſo dark he could not ſee it before: At this the Coachman was a little ſupriz'd, wondering how the Gentleman could tell where his *Hat* was, who ſat in the Coach, and the Night ſo dark he cou'd not ſee it, but drove on and obſerved all the way he went, his Horſes were very unruly and ſtarted upon every laſh he gave them, and were very Reſty and unwilling to go forward; when he came by the *Ditch ſide* he drove very ſlow. Being now within ſome few paces of the *Church-Yard*, they ſtarted again, and were ſo unruly, that in a paſſion the Coach-man deſcended from the Box, and in a great fright ſaid he would drive him

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no farther, and opened the door of the Coach, holding the Reins of his Horſes in his Whip, which he had made in a *Bow* to lengthen them that he might reach the door, the Gentleman told him he had money enough, and ſhould have what he would, reaching out his hand, which the Coach man ſaw, but no money in it; but when he went to take it could feel no hand, though he ſaw the ſame ſhape of the Gentlemans perſon in the Coach as before, who preſently ſtept out, at which the Horſes ſtarted and flying out drew the Coach-man back, who having ſtopped his Horſes and looking back to his fare, he ſaw a great black thing in the form of a Bear with great flaming Eyes which lay by the Wall ſide and made up to him, at which the Horſes preſs'd forward, and the Coach-man with much ado ſtop'd them, and taking the Reins from his Whip into his Hand, as it approached him whip'd at it, and as he thought laſh'd it; when on a ſudden it vaniſhed away in a terrible flaſh of Fire with great ſparks, as if a Flambeaux had been daſhed againſt the Wall and all flaſhed in his face, that he was ſo ſtoun'd that he did not know where he was, and loſt all Senſe in the Horrour and Conſternation he was in.

Being come home ſo amazed that he knew not where he was (the horſes as he ſuppos'd going of their own accord as they uſually would do) he was taken out of the *Box* ſpeechleſs and carried to his Bed, where he ſo remained till *Thurſday Morning* the 6 of this Inſtant, without ſpeaking a word, though he knew at the ſame time thoſe ſeveral friends who came to viſit him,

him, as he hath ſince declared. On *Thurſday* very early in the Morning, his Wife came into his chamber to ſee how he did, and as ſhe heard the *Cock* crow his Speech returned to him at that inſtant: He was viſited by ſeveral Divines who much pitied his ſad & deplorable condition, and with their Pious exhortations much comforted his poor afflicted Wife, who was almoſt diſtracted to ſee the lamentable eſtate her Husband was in. Since he recovered his ſpeech multitudes of perſons have been to ſee and diſcourſe him, to all which he has given the ſame relati on as to every particular circumſtance of this Narration, and is ready to confirm it to any perſon who is deſirous of further ſatisfaction from his own mouth; and he does further ſay, that though the perſon in the Coach when he refuſed to carry him any farther, did tell him he had money enough, and he ſhould be well ſatisfied for his pains, yet he could not perceive any in his hand, nor did receive any from him.

Since he has been able to ſpeak his limbs are ſo benumn'd that he has no ſenſe or feeling in them, but are as if they were dead, or no part of his body, he is not ſenſible of any heat though fire is applied to them which you may burn his fleſh withall, without making him ſenſible of any pain or anguiſh; and it is very much fear'd by his friends that he will never recover the uſe of them again, but remain in that ſad condition as long as he lives. For fear any perſon ſhould apprehend this was only a vain and idle fancy of a ſwimming Brain occaſioned by drunkenneſs: he does declare he was very ſober, and had been very moderate

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in his drinking all that day, and as free from being fudled as ever he was in his life; and till this ſtrange accident happened to him, without any fear or apprehenſion of ſuch a danger, which by the ſtrong impreſſion it then made upon his Spirits, and yet remains ſo firmly fix'd, to any ſober and conſidering perſon it is apparent ſomthing more than ordinary, was the cauſe of ſo ſtrange and ſudden a conſternation.

It has ſo nearly affected him, that he has reſolved never to drive Coach again, if he does ſo far recover his Limbs as to be able to do it, tho' it was an imployment he very much delighted in before, and lived very happy and contentedly by thoſe lawful gains his honeſt labour and induſtry had acquired by it.

I hope no perſon how ſtrange and improable this Relation may ſeem, will be ſo unkind to imagine any man would be ſo diſingenuous for his own private advantage to impoſe a Romance upon the world, with ſo much confidence as this is averr'd to be a Truth; and as it has already furniſhed the Town with Diſcourſe of wonder and amazement, it is no *Wapping* Apparition, but publiſhed with mature conſideration and ſcrutiny: whoſe Truth renders it as remarkable as it's ſurpriſing Circumſtances does ſtrange and wonderful.

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